

Message Text

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R 041045 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7808
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY GENEVA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES
AMCONSUL LUANDA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LISBON 1182

GENEVA FOR FERGUSON

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, XA, OAU, PO
SUBJECT: TALKS BETWEEN PORTUGAL AND AFRICANS

REF: (A) STATE 056746; (B) GENEVA 1428 (NOTAL);
(C) ADDIS ABABA 3472 (NOTAL); (D) LISBON 1003.

1. SUMMARY: RECENT EXCHANGES ON SUBJECT SUGGEST
THERE MAY BE SOME MISUNDERSTANDING OF GOP POSITION,
PARTICULARLY BY OAU REP SAHNOUN. GOP COULD NOT
ACCEPT ACKNOWLEDGED LIBERATION MOVEMENT PRESENCE AT
TALKS, AND MAY REFUSE TO TALK IF " SELF- DETERMINATION"
AGENDA ITEM IS PRESSED AS PRECONDITION. WHILE GOP
OFFER TO TALK MAY BE TACTICAL, WOULD BE MISTAKE TO
ASSUME GOP IS ACTING FROM WEAKNESS. END SUMMARY.

2. WE FEEL IT IS IMPORTANT THAT NONE OF PARTIES
INVOLVED BE MISLED ABOUT BASIS ON WHICH PORTUGUESE
WOULD ENTER TALKS, EVEN SECRET ONES. FOR THIS
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REASON, BELIEVE IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR ALL CONCERNED TO REFOCUS ON GOP FORMULATION OF FRAMEWORK FOR TALKS, A FORMULATION GOP REPS HAVE USED VERBATIM EVERY TIME THEY HAVE DISCUSSED SUBJECT AND WHICH CLEARLY REPRESENTS FULLY- CLEARED POSITION BEYOND WHICH GOP REPS NOT AUTHORIZED GO.

3. AGENDA. FOLLOWING IS PORTUGUESE- PROPOSED AGENDA:
" THE ANALYSIS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE PRINCIPLES OF THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS OF THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

(1) THE SITUATION IN THE PORTUGUESE TERRITORIES IN AFRICA AND THEIR DEVELOPMENT;
(2) RELATIONS WITH NEIGHBORING AFRICAN COUNTRIES;
(3) THE GENERAL PROBLEMS OF AFRICA . "
(REFERENCE TO UN CHARTER IS UNDOUBTEDLY INTENDED PLACE TALKS IN CONTEXT OF ARTICLE 2 (7) FORBIDDING INTERVENTION IN MATTERS OF DOMESTIC JURISDICTION OF MEMBER STATES).

4. PARTICIPANTS: WE CONCERNED THAT SAHNOUN MAY BE MISREADING PORTUGUESE POSITION RE PARTICIPANTS. FROM BEGINNING, PORTUGUESE HAVE INDICATED WILLINGNESS TALK WITH REPS AFRICAN STATES, SINGLY OR IN GROUP, OR WITH OAU, AND THIS POSITION HAS BEEN REPEATED SEVERAL TIMES. THUS IT CANNOT HAVE BEEN NEWS TO SAHNOUN THAT PORTUGUESE WILLING TALK TO OAU. HOWEVER, IN LIGHT HIS DESCRIPTION OF " OFFER" HE MADE TO GOP PERMREP PATRICIO IN UN TO HAVE LIBERATION GROUP REPS PRESENT AS " ADVISORS" TO OAU DELEGATION (PARA 2 REF C), AND " OFFER" HE DESCRIBED AS STILL " ON TABLE" (PARA 3 REF C), HE MAY BE UNDER MISTAKEN IMPRESSION THAT " SIGNAL" FROM PORTUGUESE VIA LORD HOME CONSTITUTED PORTUGUESE ACCEPTANCE THAT " OFFER." WE CAN FIND NO OTHER REASONABLE EXPLANATION FOR HIM TO HAVE DESCRIBED HOME- TRANSMITTED " SIGNAL" AS " SIGNIFICANT CHANGE OF POSITION" (PARA 4 REF B). FACT IS, PORTUGUESE HAVE NEGLECTED NO OPPORTUNITY TO INSIST THAT ONE OF TWO CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THEY WOULD ENTER TALKS IS THAT NO RPT NO INSURGENT GROUP REPS BE

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PRESENT. IF TALKS WERE TO START AND REASONABLE

ATMOSPHERE PREVAILED, CONCEIVABLY PORTUGUESE MIGHT NOT WALK OUT IF INSURGENT REPS WERE BROUGHT IN WITH APPROPRIATE " COVER," AND IF PORTUGUESE DID NOT HAVE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR IDENTITY (ALTHOUGH EVEN THIS IS DUBIOUS). BUT CERTAINLY EVERY SIGNAL WE HAVE RECEIVED FROM THE PORTUGUESE IS THAT INSURGENT EXCLUSION IS ABSOLUTE CONDITION FOR PORTUGUESE ENTRANCE INTO TALKS. INDEED, PORTUGUESE DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATION WOULD PERMIT OF NO OTHER SCENARIO.

5. SECOND CONDITION PORTUGUESE HAVE INSISTED UPON IS THAT TALKS CANNOT HAVE PREDETERMINED CONCLUSIONS. GOP MAY WELL FEEL TALKS WOULD HAVE SUCH " PREDETERMINED CONCLUSIONS" IF " RESPECTIVE POSITIONS ON MEANING OF SELF- DETERMINATION" WERE TO BE " FIRST AGENDA TOPIC" (PARA 8 REF B) OR, INDEED, ON FORMAL AGENDA AT ALL. PORTUGUESE ARE INTERESTED IN PRESENTING THEIR CASE TO AFRICANS BUT MAY SHY AWAY IF GIVEN IMPRESSION THAT TALKS WILL ESSENTIALLY BE ABOUT WAYS AND MEANS TO IMPLEMENT " SELF- DETERMINATION." PARTICULARLY SINCE NOVEMBER 1972 UNSC RESOLUTION, PORTUGUESE SUSPECT ONLY DEFINITION GENUINELY ACCEPTABLE TO AFRICANS IS " SELF- DETERMINATION LEADING TO INDEPENDENCE." IF AFRICANS WERE TO ACCEPT GOP FORMULATION OF FRAMEWORK FOR TALKS, FIRST ITEM ON GOP AGENDA (" THE SITUATION IN THE PORTUGUESE TERRITORIES IN AFRICA AND THEIR DEVELOPMENT") OFFERS OPENING FOR AFRICANS TO RAISE SUBJECT OF " SELF- DETERMINATION." HOWEVER, INSISTENCE THAT THIS HIGHLY- CHARGED PHRASE APPEAR ON PRE- TALK AGENDA MIGHT PREVENT TALKS FROM BEGINNING.

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6. FONMIN PATRICIO CLAIMED TO NEWSOM (REF D) THAT PORTUGUESE BELIEVE TIME IS ON THEIR SIDE. HE ALSO SAID GOP CRITICS REALIZE THIS AND ARE THEREFORE ATTEMPTING TO PUSH GOP NOW TO TAKE STEPS FOR WHICH CURRENTLY- EXISTING INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE WILL EVAPORATE AFTER A FEW MORE YEARS OF PORTUGUESE- INDUCED PROGRESS AND EVOLUTION. IT IS POSSIBLE PATRICIO WAS INDULGING IN BRAVADO. IT IS HOWEVER FULLY IN CHARACTER FOR PORTUGUESE TO BELIEVE THAT HISTORY WILL BAIL THEM OUT THIS TIME AS IT HAS SO OFTEN IN PAST. THEY MAY BE DELUDING THEMSELVES AND EVENTS MAY SO PROVE. BUT IN MEANTIME, THOSE WHO WOULD LIKE TO INDUCE CHANGE IN PORTUGUESE AFRICA SHOULD NOT ACT ON ASSUMPTION THAT PORTUGUESE CONSIDER THEMSELVES TO BE ON THE RUN. PORTUGUESE OFFER OF TALKS MAY HAVE BEEN LARGEY A TACTICAL POLITICAL MOVE, BUT IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE TO INTERPRET IT AS A SIGN OF WEAKNESS. IT IS NOT PORTUGUESE WHO ARE PRESSING FOR TALKS AND THUS THOSE WHO FEEL TALKS ARE IMPORTANT SHOULD AVOID GIVING PORTUGUESE GROUNDS FOR NON- ATTENDANCE.

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